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*SOME CONSIDERATIONS ON THE ADVANTAGES WE MAY  
HOPE TO DERIVE FROM EDUCATION.* [1896]

BY WILLIAM KINGSFORD, LL.D., F.R.S.(C.), OTTAWA.

It must generally be admitted that those who desire to give a good education to their own children, or to young relatives dependent on them, are guided by some theory as to the object they have in view. It may not in their own mind always be capable of definition, and the hope they form may be vague and wanting in precision. The feeling, however, whatever it may be, has a recognized activity; hence I humbly conceive that an inquiry into its character may enable us to place it in a somewhat concrete form; moreover, that it will not be unacceptable to those on whom the obligation is entailed.

If the intent be to assure the child's future, it becomes a duty to examine into the character of the direction to be given to the young mind, that this hoped-for result may be attained; and it is by no means clear that there will be a general acceptance of any positive definition of that suggestive word, success. The estimate of it must vary in the ratio of the consideration given to the moral or material results desired. Some may regard the acquisition of wealth as the first object in life. Money will purchase much, but it cannot be said that its power is unlimited. The most valuable acquisition it can confer undoubtedly is independence of conduct, and that it will extend liberty of action; not always possible with men struggling for a livelihood. It is easy to conceive the strong desire to obtain this independence, apart from any craving for luxury, and free from the desire of being reputed to be wealthy, with the status it confers. There may be many who inculcate the doctrine of the all-potentiality of money, but it cannot be said to play an admitted part in any system of teaching. Of the same character is the desire that the youth may rise to a high position in his career, for there are prizes in every calling, and fond parents hope to see their child attain distinction, whatever vocation he may follow.

With these aspirations there is a wholesome fear of the evil consequences to which ignorance can lead. We are not wanting in examples of the extent it brutalizes the individual, and of its crea-

tion of a class dangerous to the well-being of the state, to be duly guarded against with continual watchfulness. It has also its comic side, when, if free from guilt and from endless evil consequences, it casts ridicule on those afflicted with it. A story is told of a baronet utterly uneducated, whose estate lay in the neighbourhood of a battle ground renowned since the Wars of the Roses. Late in life he resolved to be presented at Court. George III., who followed the rule of making some civil remark to every person who attended his levee for the first time, found a difficulty in selecting a speciality in the baronet's career for a topic of personal comment, so he congratulated him on the historic associations of his estate as being near the scene of a renowned battle. The baronet was surprised by the remark. Finally he stammered out, "It is true, your Majesty, that I did have a few rounds with the blacksmith, but I am surprised the fact should be known to your Majesty."

We may smile at the story, let us profit by its teaching and cultivate the judgment and intelligence to avoid such an exhibition. An unhappy incident of this character might mar a career from which much was hoped, and create a false impression only to be effaced by careful effort.

We cannot fail early to learn the vastness of the field of modern art, science and literature, in which as a whole we can attain but little more, than partial and elementary knowledge. We may see the plain widely extended before us, but how few are able to pass onward to any extent on its ample space. As we advance forward towards the goal we desire to reach, we soon learn that it is only by continuous movement we can accomplish the journey to excellence and prominence in any one branch of learning. What really can we know of many subjects beyond their first principles and mere elementary facts? Whatever the training we pass through, and however efficient the aids we receive in our studies, we must be all more or less self-educated. The difference lies in the start made in life's race; the progress we may achieve in our endeavour to reach the goal is really dependent on our own effort. It is by our own industry alone that the problem lying before us for solution can be mastered.

One of the objections urged against the study of the classics is the limited progress made by the schoolboy, and that unless continued in mature life, from the insufficiency of the knowledge obtained, is of no value. It must be extremely limited for this criticism to be accepted. The boy at least learns the abstract laws

and structure of grammar, and gains some acquaintance with the history and civilization of antiquity. Is it different in any other pursuit? In abstract mathematics, in chemistry, or in the study of any of the economic sciences that have advanced human happiness and civilization? What proficiency under the conditions named are we able to attain beyond mastering some main facts? The first heights of a range of hills, seen from the plain below, stand out to us as the attainable object of our journey; when they have been gained they are discovered to be only a series of successive elevations rising above us, which, one by one, have to be surmounted before the summit is reached. Equally in the pursuit of knowledge; in no long period we are taught how illimitable is the field before us.

It is not immediately that a boy can learn the books of Euclid that are read; but when mastered, I put it to any mathematician, if anything more than a trifling advance has been made in a long and difficult study. It was the tradition of a former time that mathematics expanded the reasoning faculties, and the study of them was commended as a means of mental discipline. This view has passed away. If we admit the testimony of ancient and modern thinkers, no studies tend to cultivate a smaller number of the faculties, or in a more partial or feeble manner. I could multiply examples of this view expressed by men eminent in the world's history. I will confine myself to d'Alembert and Descartes. The former said of the study that it only made straight the minds without a bias, and only dried up and chilled natures already prepared for the operation. Descartes wrote that he was anxious not to lose any more of his time in the barren operation of geometry and arithmetic studies which never lead to anything important. Voltaire tells us, *j'ai toujours remarqué que la géométrie laisse l'esprit où elle le trouve*. It is not to be denied that much ingenuity is required in the higher mathematics, such as in the integration of a complicated differential; an exercise of knowledge and judgment, only attainable by study and perseverance. The operation, however, is nothing more than the reduction of an equation to greater simplicity, and I cannot recognize any operation of reason, or any mental training beyond the exercise of patience and diligence. Moreover, when the result has been reached, it is simply the means to an end: the creation of a formula applicable to mechanics or astronomy. In the former to determine the force required to meet a strain; in the latter to admit of the calculation

of the movement of heavenly bodies; a science essential to the architect, the engineer, the electrician and the astronomer. I refer those who desire to examine into the view I express to the "Discussions on Literature and Philosophy," by Sir William Hamilton.

The same remark applies to the physical sciences, whether it be chemistry, geology, electricity, indeed to any section of physics. The interval is wide between the incidental study of any branch, and concentrated undivided attention in its acquirement. The former only aims at a general superficial acquaintance with facts and principles, in itself desirable and worthy of consideration, for it saves us from making ourselves ridiculous, and enables us to understand new inventions and discoveries. What can we learn of chemistry, except in a general way, without constant experiments with stills and retorts, the use of delicate instruments for analysis, and the pneumatic trough for the test of gases; indeed even a moderate knowledge of chemistry calls for the work of years in a laboratory. The superficial information we obtain from books we soon forget, and all that we commit to memory relative to symbols, is only remembered by those with whom it is a duty to bear them constantly in mind. Nevertheless it is our duty to know something of chemistry without the desire of becoming chemists. In the same way minute and precise knowledge relative to geology, mineralogy, electricity is only possible when we make some one study the leading subject of investigation. Can we hope to do more in any case than master the leading facts and characteristics of the several sciences we superficially investigate?

How can it be otherwise if the men who attain eminence concentrate their attention on one branch only? There is such a subdivision of labour, so constant an examination of the codified truths, such nice and delicate distinctions, possibly slight in themselves, but on which important theories depend, that it is only by constant study and examination that the truth is to be had. In modern scientific work, the "good all round man" is simply acceptable in the circle of mediocrity. He may shine in an after-dinner conversation, and, with those who know a subject superficially, may pass for erudite; but with abler critics his reputation is indeed slight. The French tell us that in the kingdom of the blind the one-eyed are kings, *Dans le royaume des aveugles les borgnes sont rois*. In modern life, to succeed in the science we profess, we require both eyes, and the use of every faculty.



On this point I will ask, whether in the high schools and universities we are not introducing too many subjects, and thus dissipate the attention of the student in place of concentrating it upon the choice he should make of a limited number; the studies enforced having little influence on the formation of character. There is a tendency to impart a superficial knowledge of a multiplicity of subjects, each one of which to be thoroughly mastered demands many years of patient study. Are we justified in devoting the first years of impressionable youth to this diversified ordeal? Is it not rather our duty to inculcate the belief that knowledge can only be attained by persistent effort in one direction. You may look through the records of literature, art, science and political life; you may probe the lives of those who have attained eminence, I care not what the career has been, you will find that success in each case was not attributable to imperfect, uncertain, feverish, dissipated effort, but to careful, conscientious study directed within the acquirement by which reputation has been gained.

I am afraid that this is not the common view. The modern curriculum embraces a multitude of subjects, even the narrative of which is bewildering.

We may recall the advertisement of the immortal Squeers in *Nicholas Nickleby*.

"Youth are boarded, clothed, booked, furnished with pocket-money, provided with all necessaries, instructed in all languages, living and dead, mathematics, orthography, geometry, astronomy, trigonometry, the use of the globes, algebra, single stick (if required), writing, arithmetic, fortification, and every other branch of classical literature. Terms: Twenty guineas per annum. No extras, no vacation, and diet unparalleled."

This diversity, however, is by no means antagonistic to the views of the class, who, rejecting classics and modern languages as the studies best adapted to form the mind, would substitute the sciences for the inculcation of mental discipline. We cannot, however, adduce the influence that science has exercised on civilization and personal comfort, with its ramifications and beneficent effects, as a criterion of the moral benefit to be inculcated by the study so advocated. Any system of education that would neglect such consideration would be strangely imperfect. It was the fault in the teaching of the last, and the early years of this century. It is absolutely necessary that we obtain a fair knowledge of the principles and laws by which natural phenomena in the application of science are controlled; but this acquaintance with every day

facts is widely different from the minute and extended investigations, conducted as if it were the pursuit of an attainment to form the main labour of after life.

It cannot be gainsaid that any one science consists of a myriad of cumulative inter-dependent facts from which generalizations are drawn to admit of nomenclature, classification, and order, inductively forming the principles by which any science is governed. Essentially it is the case in geology; palæontology is above all other of its branches dependent on minute differences of species. We may recollect "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table," by Oliver Wendell Holmes, who tells us of the professor who had devoted the main years of his life to the special study of a species of the beetle. We have to-day men who are mentioned as authorities of the species of the trilobite, and who define the classification of the porifera, known as the common sponge.

This minute study is essential in the determination of geological epochs, the relative age in the formations of the earth's genesis, as a guide to practical husbandry; but this technical minuteness can have no influence on general education. In this respect I conceive that it is unwise to do more than attempt to implant the cardinal facts and the general principles which, to a certain extent, can be mastered by ordinary industry.

Undoubtedly there is a great difference in the mental constitution of students, and their capacity for learning. No fallacy is so patent as the declaration that all men are born equal. Some are highly favoured in appearance and disposition. In a large city the consequence of our civilization is, that the majority of its denizens must toil and moil, and the few be rich and prosperous. We also differ in the objects individually we desire to attain; but in this inequality we find the incentive to progress, and the influences by which civilization is advanced, for the one active principle prevails, we aim to attain that which we do not possess. Johnson laughed at the idea of any one writing a book, except for some reward. The man in want of money has its acquisition in view. Those in the enjoyment of ample means seek for honour and distinction. We cannot hope to find in this world the happy valley of peace and content, where no wish is unsatisfied and want unknown. Who can read unmoved Johnson's address to those "who listen with credulity to the whispers of fancy, and pursue with eagerness the phantoms of hope, who expect that age will perform

the promises of youth, and the deficiencies of the present day will be supplied by the morrow." In a few words, it is a chapter of despondency and disappointment.

I believe that it is generally conceded, that whatever the inequalities of life, the means of happiness are equally extended: that is to say, that it lies in the grasp of all who seek to obtain it by prudence, rectitude and self-denial; that we are less dependent on external circumstances than many suppose. It has been said that a man is what he knoweth. Is it not more correct to say that a man is what he wanteth; so much is artificial in modern civilization that we learn to entertain fanciful requirements. It is difficult to see how it can be otherwise with the incitements to comfort and ease which science furnishes.

In all the changes in the mode of life during the last seventy years, in the improvements of material comfort in every direction, with the extraordinary effect of the introduction of railways, which have worked a revolution in modern thought scarcely inferior to the impetus given by printing, and with the general dissemination of education in all classes, with all this, I humbly conceive that the student of history will find the main characteristics of humanity to be the same to-day as we read of them in Herodotus. We may trace in the early records the same varied panorama of passion, motive, patriotism, cruelty, self-interest and abnegation, with examples of that indescribable fascination which never fails to attract, and of that ruggedness of manner which so constantly repels, as we to-day experience in the intercourse with our fellows. We meet much in the study of the past to colour the theories we may form of human life. The improvement in morals, manners and attainments visible in our observation of this century cannot be referred to all classes. The imperishable works of ancient literature remain to betoken the highest genius, the most subtle originality, a marvellous knowledge of the human heart, set forth in an energetic and most perfect form of expression; works which have outlived twenty centuries. The improvement most discernible is to be traced in the attainments, the manners, habits and tastes of the humbler classes. The Roman spectators who crowded to the circus to witness the Christian overcome in the struggle with some wild, savage beast, and torn to pieces, or who shrieked out applause during the combat of gladiators when the fate of the vanquished depended on the upturned thumbs of the excited crowd, as Byron

has written, slaughtered to make a Roman holiday, from their standing point could not recognize that there was hard-hearted cruelty or inhumanity in their nature. In their view they were present at a legalized ordinary amusement. In their hard code suicide was looked upon as the legitimate relief from misery. The reader of Livy may recollect the last Macedonian king, Perseus, imploring his conqueror, Æmilius Paulus, not to lead him in triumph, and receiving the reply that the matter was in his own hands.

Now-a-days we look sternly on amusements disgraced by brutality. We legislate against cock-fighting and dog fights. Bull-baiting has long been forbidden by law. The prize ring, however, although illegal, retains its supporters, who, if not numerous, are certainly noisy.

It seems to me that in the examination I am attempting so imperfectly to make of the results we hope to effect in the education of our children, or, as my contemporaries would say of our grandchildren, it is not possible to pass unnoticed the consideration of all that can be effected by home influences. How much lies in the power of the mother, or the female connection who supplies her place! Indeed it is not possible to overestimate all that can be effected by this wise and fostering care. M. de Quincey in his essay on Shakespeare has speculated upon what Shakespeare's mother must have been. Mary, the daughter of Robert Arden, of Wellingeote, of one of the most ancient families in Warwickshire, which Dugdale tells us can be traced for six centuries from the days of Edward the Confessor. Mary Arden! as Charles Knight says, the name breathes poetry. Her position in the county gives an assurance of the worth and station of the Shakespeare family, and sets at naught many of the absurd myths that have entwined themselves around the supreme and universal excellence of her son. To my mind, in the scenes with the Queen in Hamlet, there is a deference shown by the son to the mother, in spite of her vices, which suggests Shakespeare's recollections of the happiness of his own young years.

By these home influences the child's mind can be moulded in the qualities of gentleness, of thoughtfulness of others, and with sympathy with what is good. When we have had the happiness to receive this teaching, the effect never wholly leaves us, whatever follies as we advance in life we may commit.

May I be permitted to express the hope that those present who have responsibilities of this character will ponder over my humble words, and consider the extent that the future of those dependent on them may be moulded to good by their precept and example.

It may be inferred from what I have said that in my poor judgment, neither the study of mathematics nor of the sciences can be recognized as the surest means of training, forming and developing the young mind; that in their extended study they must be regarded as technical, to be followed with the design of fitting a student for a professional career. There will ever be two schools advocating different theories of education; the one the practical; the other, for want of a better word, may be called the philosophical, in the etymological meaning of the word; the love of wisdom. The former assumes that all teaching is preparatory for active intercourse with the world in the state of life to be followed. The second keeps in primary prominence the development of the moral being; the effort to endow it with fixed principles, to create a standard of duty, to impregnate the young mind with sentiments of honour, truth and duty.

It would be absurd, as it would be unjust, to deny that these views have no place in practical education, and that the advocates of this system, when affirming as a primary principle that nothing should be learned but what may prove useful, neglect all moral training. Indeed they contend that it fully finds place in their system; but, that such is the competition in every avenue of progress that in order to fit the youth successfully to struggle with his competitors, it is necessary to gain the ability of doing so at as early a period of his life as possible. This argument is met by the objection that this peculiar training engenders much thought of self, that its tendency may make a man expert in a peculiar walk of life, but is not elevating in a moral point of view.

Nor is there accord among those who adopt the opposite theory that the greater advantage is attainable from the study of languages. The advocates of this view are divided on the expediency of prominence being given to the ancient over modern languages. Here we meet the practical argument that Latin and Greek, in whatever light they may be regarded as accomplishments, are useless in our intercourse with the world, while modern languages really prove of daily utility.

I have spoken of the limit of attainment in the general knowledge which a boy in the ordinary course of education may reach in the few years of his school novitiate. It is the common experi-

ence, unless with those endowed with rare ability, to permit of exceptional progress. It is stated of the late Lord Leighton that his father remarked to Powers, the sculptor, that after much hesitation he had at length consented to make his son an artist. Powers at once interrupted him by replying "that, nature has done for you." This illustration sustains the view that those only gifted with genius and great powers can reach the first rank of the calling they embrace. Indeed the most able and conscientious teacher can do little more than trace for us the path we should follow: it depends on our own abnegation and industry how far we advance upon it. I venture to express the opinion that in no one pursuit is the fact more apparent than in the study of a modern language. There is hardly anything so special. So many considerations are embraced, grammar, idiom, the knowledge of the words and phrases in use, the *tournure* of the language, the genders, the pronunciation, both of great importance, for a fault in either direction may lead to a sad *faux pas*. I recollect once remarking to a young girl who, I was given to understand, knew French perfectly, "*Vous parlez donc Français, mademoiselle.*" Her intention was to reply "*un peu,*" she said "*un pou,*" for the meaning of which I refer you to the dictionary.

Necessarily there are degrees of education enforced by circumstances. If the boy, from family exigencies, is destined at an early age to gain his own bread, the time at his disposal will admit only of his learning reading, writing and arithmetic as they are now sometimes spoken of as the three R's. This teaching is all that is possible with what incidental instruction can be given in general history, and in the principles of applied science. Where no such sacrifice is required, in my poor opinion, the study of the ancient languages should form the basis of education: Latin preceding Greek, the cultivation of which must depend on time and opportunity. Even a moderate knowledge of the former language, and I admit such is the general result in ordinary cases, tends more than any other form of knowledge to discipline the mind. From the structure of these languages and the strict laws of grammar a logical habit of thought is called forth, and a key to the grammar of all modern languages is gained by the study. Likewise the history of Greece and Rome encourages generous sympathies with the student, for it is replete with examples of patriotism, self-sacrifice, courage and devotion to duty; conduct never recorded but with praise. While vice, cruelty, treachery, meanness, false-

hood and tyranny are mentioned with detestation. Equally it inculcates the love of truth, the foster-mother of every virtue. That sense of right and of duty, which, as Socrates tells Crito, is a voice I seem to hear as the coryphantes hear the sound of flutes with the resound of the echo, that nothing else can be heard. No one will dispute that the study confers purity of style and correctness of taste. Is it not something to speak and write our noble language with simplicity, force and correctness so that we are never misunderstood, and are able to express our thoughts with vigour and subtle emphasis? To command attention without affectation, to avoid the effort when artifice is apparent in every sentence? To learn to imitate the language we find in the writings of Goldsmith, of Macaulay, Jeffery, Sydney Smith and de Quincey. There must be a groundwork for every class of information, and what is essential is the creation of a core of sound knowledge, around which is to be coiled the technical attainments by which we are to gain our bread.

Parents must not suppose that a schoolboy leaves the sixth form with much more than a general knowledge of the ancient languages. He does not in the allotted time become a professional scholar, such as we read of three centuries back, when Latin was the common medium of correspondence; which produced men of the type of Erasmus, Luther, Roger Ascham, or Milton; in modern times as Bentley; or who possess the knowledge of Greek of Porson, Jowett or Lowe (Lord Sherbrooke), of whom hereafter I have to speak. I have to ask, is the progress in science or in modern languages relatively greater under the conditions I name? My argument is simply this, that limited as the knowledge of the classics possessed by the boy at the close of his school life, or even as a youth in leaving the university, the study of them is the safest ordeal to follow in the formation of mind and character.

The rebound against this theory is attributable to the excessive and almost exclusive teaching of these languages in vogue until the first twenty years of this century. They formed the main basis of education; indeed little else was taught. What was known as "cyphering" was taught after Walker's Arithmetic. We are told by Lord Sherbrooke that the mathematical master at Winchester stopped at the fourth book of Euclid, and this was after 1825. English grammar was not looked upon as an essential; modern history obtained but scant attention; French a moderate amount of study; German at that date was in the matter of education an unknown



tongue. Not the slightest attention was given to science. Possibly there were occasional lectures on astronomy and on electricity, in the former with a workable orrery, in the latter the experiments made were the chief feature. Latin and Greek were alone considered paramount. So much so, that in an essay written in 1811, Sydney Smith complained that it was the custom to bring up the first young men of the country as if they were all to keep grammar schools in little country towns; and that a nobleman, upon whose knowledge and liberality the honour and welfare of his country may depend, is diligently worried for half his life with longs and shorts. No man was considered fit for a bishop who was not learned in Aristophanes; indeed we owe some of the best editions of classics to clergymen looking for preferment.

The teaching is now in the opposite direction. Horace tells us that when foolish people avoid one vice they run to the opposite extreme. *Dum vitant stulti vitia in contraria currunt.* Thus the exclusive study of science or modern languages is advocated and any attention given to the classics is pronounced to be a waste of time. A powerful advocate of this theory was one of the most distinguished men of modern times, the late Robert Lowe, Viscount Sherbrooke, a scholar of rare gifts and multiplied attainments. From his recognized classical knowledge and his opposition to the study, there arose the *mot* that he was the Phillippe Egalité of this branch of learning. Of a respectable family in the squirearchy of Notts, under the great physical disadvantage of imperfect sight, he worked his way up to the first rank in political life, having been Chancellor of the Exchequer. He numbered among his friends the first public men and the first scholars in England. It may interest those who do me the favour to listen to me, that he was an intimate friend of Sir Edmund Head, and visited him when Governor-General, in Toronto in 1856. Sir Edmund then consulted him on the selection of the seat of government for the Province of Canada, as then constituted, and he is accredited with having contributed to the recommendation of Ottawa as the capital. We also read of him in the biography by Mr. Patchet Martin, that his influence to some extent led to the withdrawal of the British garrisons from Canada. He said in the House of Commons, "In my opinion nothing could be so strong or so incentive in America to war with this country as the notion that they could catch a small English army and lead it away in triumph. Never mind, if it were thirty



to one it would be all the same; the popularity that such a capture would confer upon the successful general or President of the period would be irresistible." [Vol. II. p. 233.]

Mr. Lowe was one of those elaborately educated Englishmen who are entirely without acquaintance with the history of Canada, some tell us we have no history, or even of the continent, until the United States became a power in modern international relations. He knew nothing of the revolutionary war of a century back, or he would have more correctly judged the two great disasters experienced by the British, and there were two only, the surrender of Burgoyne at Saratoga and of Cornwallis at Yorktown; both perfectly explicable. They were, in the first place, caused by the meddling, cowardly, incapable Lord George Germain, typical of all that is insolent to an official subordinate, and of extreme sycophancy to the King. He was then Secretary of the Colonies, and he threw the blight of his presence on all brought in contact with him. The incompetence of Burgoyne, joined to the abandonment of him by Germain, led to his surrender. It was possible for him to have retreated with his army in safety, but to spare himself the disgrace of that reverse he strove to establish that he had been ordered to execute what was in itself impossible. It was Germain's correspondence with Cornwallis which led to his self-assertion, his disregard of orders, and his bad generalship that caused his defeat: and we must not set out of view the want of enterprise, courage and conduct of the British admiral. Mr. Lowe evidently knew nothing of the U. E. Loyalists who settled Upper Canada, and their descendants; and he had no thought of the war of 1812, and its stirring memories, which appeal so strongly to every Canadian heart. You, who are here present, cannot fail to remember that within the last few months a powerful appeal has been made to this sentiment, and that the whole country was stirred to the heart's core, to a burst of feeling by what could only be construed as an appeal to their sense of duty and of patriotism. Let us fervently pray it may pass away. We cannot be insensible to the danger of our position, but there is the common resolve, if the exigency so exact, we must meet it as men. I am not here to discuss this point, but I feel bound to protest against the opinion of Lord Sherbrooke as irrational and unfounded.

I fully recognize the great qualities that distinguished Lord Sherbrooke. Few public men have exceeded him in ability, in honesty of principle, in patriotism, courage and tenacity of purpose. It is difficult to reconcile his utterances with his attainments, for all who follow his career must recognize how much he owed to the training he received. Jowett, the celebrated master of Baliol, dedicated to him his translation of Thucydides. In doing so he de-

scribed Lowe as one of the best Greek scholars in England, whose genuine love of ancient classical literature, though sometimes dissembled, is as well known to his friends as the kindness of his heart and the charm of his conversation. I can but cursorily allude to the arguments advanced by him. At Glasgow he dwelt upon the neglect of other and more valuable studies, and one of his epigrammatic sayings was that the English universities had loaded the dice in favour of the dead languages. At the dinner of the Institution of Civil Engineers in 1872 he laughed at the battle of Marathon as a small affair, not calling for any particular criticism, for 192 were only killed on the side of the victors. Mr. Lowe could not but know on that day was decided whether or not the dawning light of intellect should be stamped out, and the rule of an irresponsible tyrant be affirmed. Until Marathon the name of the Mede was a terror to the Greeks. "The Athenians, who are they?" asked the great king. The answer was given on the plain of Marathon when the principles of civilization and liberty were first established.

There was truth in Mr. Lowe's criticism as to the excessive attention given to classics. But it may be said that he rather changed the direction of a youth's studies without conferring benefit on his mind and thought. It is difficult to recognize that he advanced the true purport of education, the development of the reasoning powers, by his advocacy of confining the attention of the boy to modern languages and the sciences. Every earnest student of a modern language not his own, early discovers that he must give to it exclusive attention. Let me ask you, of what value in the practical duties of life is superficial knowledge of any kind? But even a little Latin is of use in the study of French. If you have a fair knowledge of both, and it is your fate to visit Italy, you will be surprised at the facility with which you will pick up the language for everyday conventional use. I do not speak of literary proficiency of the language, as any of you will soon discover, if placed in a position to observe the distinction. German is another matter. It is a study entirely apart. Many may conceive that being cognate with English his mother tongue will aid him. It is quite the reverse. The analogies between the two languages require advanced knowledge to perceive. I may adduce a familiar example. Our gable, the wall closing at an angular point, is the word *gabel*, a fork. It conveys the same idea; here the relationship stops. German is a language demanding the closest application. Thus, I contend that the study of these languages and the pursuit of science, however laudable in themselves and elevating in themselves, can only be considered as advanced studies for the higher education, when the character is formed and fitted to receive them.

Lowe himself to the last clung to the love of classics, and they never ceased to furnish illustrations in his argument. There is a comic incident connected with the tax, which as Chancellor of the Exchequer he introduced, ~~a tax~~ on the manufacture of matches. It obtained favour in the House of Commons, and in the present day writers of eminence on political economy justify it. The manufacturers opposed to the tax, as manufacturers are in such circumstances, had a card to play which they did not neglect. They started up all the young girls engaged in the manufacture and in the sale, by the dread of losing their means of livelihood, and induced them to form themselves in a procession with banners and music, and proceed to the House of Commons, noisily to protest against the tax being enforced. The unthinking public accepted the trick as a good demonstration against an unjust imposition. The proposition at the time, and since that date, has been brought forward in a disparaging spirit to Lowe's ability, and in a minor way caused him annoyance. A strange feature of the case was that the stamp required by law bore a Latin motto, *Ex luce lucellum*, which may be translated, "A little profit out of light."

In a number of Punch at the time Mr. Lowe's statue was given placed on a match-box, with the distich:

*Ex luce lucellum*, we all of us know,  
But if Lucy can't sell them, what then, Mr. Lowe?

I have felt it my duty to introduce Mr. Lowe's name, as from his deservedly high reputation no one opposed to classical training has obtained greater countenance or weight.

It remains for me briefly to summarize the advantages we may hope to confer by a judicious system of education. Primarily we escape the penalties entailed upon ignorance, and we avoid the errors it is too often the lot of the uneducated to commit. The manners of youth become more subdued and gentle. It is the effort to lead to the abandonment of prejudice, to inculcate habits of self-respect and self-reliance, and to endow manhood with the capacity of living respectably in the condition assigned to us, and of finding honest resources in leisure: generally of forming the character according to the precepts of truth, honour and unselfishness. I know no better detail of this aspiration than what we are taught in the church catechism, which doubtless you all know, but it will not harm any of us to hear these noble words. We are there told to "love our neighbours as ourselves, to hurt nobody by word or deed, to be true and just in all our dealings, to bear no malice nor hatred in our hearts, to keep our hands from picking and stealing,

and our tongues from evil speaking, lying and slandering; to keep our bodies in temperance, soberness and chastity, not to covet or desire other men's goods, but to learn and labour truly to get our own living, and to do our duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call us."

Naturally we look forward that our children will be well acquainted with the history of their own country, with a general knowledge of the motherland, and of the great Empire to which we have the happiness to belong. We hope to make them intelligent human beings, useful members of society, to possess principle to withstand temptation, and integrity to rise above the seductions which everywhere present themselves. I may be told that these are accepted moral truths. Yes, but while teaching the requirements enforced by our daily life according to our duties and station, surely we ought not to omit to impart the moral force and the dignity of character by which the temptations to which every human being is subjected can be met and mastered.

There is a phrase of the people worthy of remembrance, that "Life is not all beer and skittles." It is a truth we learn at an early date. We find how the most prosperous career is chequered by many disappointments; that the most favourable, equally with the least attractive, condition entails serious and exacting duties, and that failure in their observance leads to a day of reckoning, certain and sure, be it late or early. We are taught how much of our fate lies in our own hands; that when dark days come upon us we have to be true to our purpose, and that we slacken neither our perseverance nor our hope. We cannot be insensible to the fact that there is much good and evil fortune by which our destinies are shaped, but we do not better our condition by stopping on the roadside to weep over a reverse.

I trust my imperfectly expressed remarks have not tired you. I have to thank you for the attention you have been good enough to give in listening to me. Even if, as Saint Paul says, you have had need of patience, I have striven not to be wearisome. Permit me in my last words to repeat Juvenal's celebrated lines from the Tenth Satire:

"The one certain path to a life of peace is through the observance of virtue. Oh, fortune! if prudence guide us, thou hast no divinity, but we make thee a goddess and place thee in heaven."

*Nullum numen habes si sit prudentia sed te,  
Nos facimus, Fortuna, Deam, caeloque locamus.*





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